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THE BEARING ON DRAMATIC SEQUENCE OF THE VARIA IN *RICHARD THE THIRD* AND *KING LEAR*

In studying the larger problem of substitutes for causal sequence in the drama as a whole and in tragedy in particular, I was led to examine Shakespeare's plays with special reference to the question of what bearing the quarto-folio varia might have on dramatic sequence. Naturally, I started with *Richard the Third* and *King Lear* because the plot of *King Lear* is by far the weakest of any of the great tragedies, and because two of the most famous varia in *Richard the Third* are concerned with cruces in dramatic probability. In presenting the evidence that in some of the plays there is a definite relation between the varia and dramatic sequence, I am therefore confining myself to these two plays. For although this would naturally be one of the purposes kept in mind in case Shakespeare did revise any of his plays, yet it will be most evident, if it is evident at all, in the varia of those plays in which the plots are weak.

In the folio version of *Richard the Third* the principal changes that bear on dramatic sequence are necessarily additions to the quarto, for of the total varia of 257 lines only 39 quarto lines are omitted in the folio. On the other hand, many of the varia in *King Lear* that have an evident relation to this principle are found in the 275 quarto lines which the folio omits. The methods of securing dramatic sequence in the two plays are not, however, essentially dissimilar, but arise out of the general nature of Shakespeare's treatment of plot before and after what are generally called the plays of the second period, extending in general from the *Merchant of Venice* in 1596 to *Twelfth Night* and *All's Well* in 1601-2.

So far as the extent of the varia are concerned, an arbitrary basis of comparison might be readily established by taking *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, and *All's Well That Ends Well* as dividing into two groups the plays with quarto editions. For these three plays have no quarto editions, and all plays generally considered as preceding them in which there are a dozen lines of full-line varia have more lines in the folio than they have in the quarto, while

in the two great plays written afterward which have quartos published before Shakespeare's death, *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, the folio omits more lines than it adds.

All five comedies which have quarto editions belong to this earlier group. *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, the *Merchant of Venice*, and *Much Ado about Nothing* have not, taken all together, twenty lines of full-line varia; but the *Merry Wives of Windsor* had not only been freely added to but in parts rewritten before it reached the folio.

Of the other plays generally considered as written previous to 1600, the quarto of the *First Part of Henry the Fourth* is essentially the same as the folio, and so far as full-line varia are concerned the great and most puzzling differences in *Romeo and Juliet* are those between Q_1 and Q_2 , both published before 1600. *Titus Andronicus*, however, has 80 more lines in the folio than in the quarto, *Richard the Third* has 140, the *Second Part of Henry the Fourth* has 160, and the quarto of *Henry the Fifth* is so incomplete that the Cambridge editors do not mark its omissions. *Richard the Second*, moreover, is only a seeming exception, for though the folio omits 45 lines of the earlier quartos, yet the 165 lines of the abdication scene, published first in the quarto of 1608 and well within the time of the second group, more than offset the seeming discrepancy.

To contrast with these earlier plays to which the folio adds more lines than it omits from the quarto version, we have only two of the later plays of which there were quarto editions published before Shakespeare's death and in which the full-line varia are so numerous as to afford adequate contrast. In each of these two plays, however, there are over twice as many quarto lines omitted from the folio as there are new lines added. The folio of *Hamlet* contains nearly 100 new lines but it omits over 200, while the folio of *King Lear* omits 275 quarto lines and adds only 102.

Naturally, of course, before drawing any conclusions as to whether an explicit effort to secure better dramatic sequence had anything to do with causing the varia, it is necessary to give full credit to other explanations, and more particularly to those most commonly assigned by critics who insist that Shakespeare never revised any of his plays. This is especially necessary merely as a precaution,

since varia might have an evident bearing on dramatic sequence and yet have originated without any special reference to it. In fact it was only after having given due weight to evident and possible printers' errors, players' cuts, etc., and after having checked over the varia that these might explain and those that they could not explain, that I became convinced that there was a causal relation between the principle of dramatic sequence and the varia in *Richard the Third* and *King Lear*.

To understand in full the part dramatic sequence played in transforming the quarto versions into the folio versions, one needs to get rid of any general impressions gained from reading much loose comment as to how early Shakespeare attained to mastery of plot. To be sure, there is a constantly increasing skill in his professional manipulation of plot elements, but the enthusiasm which can see plot excellence in *Titus Andronicus* and the *Comedy of Errors* needs to be calmed by analysis until the impossibly bridged chasms in the *Merchant of Venice* are as evident as the diabolic dexterity of sheer chance in *Romeo and Juliet*. In fact so little important is the closely knit plot to the character of the plays previous to *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*, that it is in no way conceivable how any one of them could either be patched up or remolded, even by Shakespeare, so that it would have unbroken causal sequence.

This is not in any sense a sweeping charge against the dramatic art of a score of Shakespeare's earlier plays. In many of them, especially in those where he was coming fully into his own, Shakespeare was dealing with themes that for the most part need no convincing causal sequence for their fairly adequate development. But after he had tried his master-hand, not only at plots that did require as perfect unbroken causal sequence as he could create, but also at others that taxed to the fullest his skill in supplying something equally convincing where causal connection was logically or dramatically impossible, surely he could have gone back over many of his plays and improved on their dramatic sequence.

To understand how much he could improve a play by revising it without in any sense rewriting it, and by making comparatively few changes, take the plays where the quarto-folio varia are over 200 but under 400 lines, *Richard the Third*, *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*. Of the

plays that were published in quarto before he left London for Stratford surely these three would receive such attention at his hands if any did, and when they are carefully read with reference to the varia both of omission and insertion, they give at least some ground for the belief that at some time or other they did receive such revision. And of all the proof that they did receive such revision, the most evident and perhaps even the most convincing is the careful, consistent effort to improve the dramatic sequence in *Richard the Third* and *King Lear*.

In spite of the fact that *King Lear* was written in the same general period as *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth*, and *Richard the Third* so long before, the groundwork of the plot in both is essentially of the same character. In type of subject we should naturally class *King Lear* with *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, but the method of development is essentially the same as that of the historical plays. Of the close-knit causal sequence in *Macbeth*, and of the dramatic sequence in *Othello* and *Coriolanus*, which is so perfect as to be almost causal, *King Lear* has even less than *Richard the Third*. In fact in both *Richard the Third* and *King Lear* the plots are so clearly held together by dramatic sequence of the non-causal type that it is a fascinating study to see how Shakespeare made the sequence more perfect and convincing. His mastery of stagecraft is shown by the skill with which he inserts here a line and there a longer passage that would make the sequence more natural or more convincing, and it is no less evident in his adroit removal of whatever delayed the movement or too manifestly obtruded itself above the current of the plot.

The general groundwork of the plot of *King Lear* is essentially that of the historical plays, but ten years more of practice had greatly increased Shakespeare's skill in linking his incidents together convincingly, and fewer lines are added in the folio of *King Lear* than in the folio of *Richard the Third*. On the other hand, Shakespeare's skill in characterization and his delight in depicting inner conflict had grown until at times it positively got in the way of the plot. The number of lines Shakespeare found it necessary to sacrifice in order to improve the dramatic sequence is therefore far greater in *King Lear* than in *Richard the Third*. Yet the plan of revision is essentially the same in both plays, and so dominant is the effort to

improve both plays in this one particular that not only many of even the two- and three-line varia seem to have been introduced chiefly for this purpose but a surprising proportion of the one-line varia seem surely to have their origin in this alone.

In an article of reasonable length no attempt can be made to make and defend an inclusive list of all the varia which had their origin chiefly in an attempt to improve the dramatic sequence of the two plays. There is so much ground for difference of opinion over particular passages, especially over those varia which can be explained at least in part by other theories, that to attempt to force this theory to cover even all of the varia to which it has proper claim would be to obscure in controversy its real importance in the revision.

Naturally, however, one would expect to find most of the passages upholding the theory of revision for dramatic sequence among the varia of some length. As a matter of fact, all but one of the four-line varia (*Richard Third*, III, iv, 104-7) can be explained without appeal to this theory, and though many of the one-, two-, and three-line varia bear on dramatic sequence, yet if we disregard for the moment all of four lines and under, we have sharpened the outlines of our problem. There are, in fact, only 35 varia of over four lines each, though they amount to a total of 473 lines, and we can still further reduce the number of cases it is necessary to consider by grouping those varia that should be considered together, and by dropping from consideration those which have other equally valid explanations. For by so doing not only will the bearing of many of the longer varia on dramatic sequence be still more unmistakable, but we shall be in a position to test more intelligently the probable origin of many of the minor varia.

Of these 35 varia with a total of 473 lines, there are 25 which fall readily into two classes with reference to dramatic sequence. For most of the others, other explanations may seem more probable, and though all but two or three have at least some bearing on the problem of sequence, yet as in this respect they would need to be considered singly, and as they total only 88 lines, the true relation of the longer varia to dramatic sequence will perhaps stand out more clearly if we consider the 25 varia, with 385 lines, which can be readily considered in larger groups. For we shall have every reason to give

this principle due consideration in the explanation of quarto-folio changes if it can be shown that almost one-half of all the longer varia are omissions of lines which interfered with effective dramatic sequence, and that a fourth of all the longer varia are additions which supply new connections not found in the quarto or which improve upon the quarto in this respect.

To classify these 25 varia briefly as an aid to following the presentation of the chief evidence that *Richard the Third* and *King Lear* were revised with special reference to this principle, there are 14 of these longer varia which were in the quartos, but which the folios omit, which are here grouped together with reference to the effect their mere omission had on dramatic sequence. The remaining 11 will be considered with reference to the general problem of whether the longer varia found first in the folio were in the original version and were omitted in the quarto or whether they were introduced later in order either to provide new sequence or to strengthen the original sequence as found in the quarto.

Of these longer varia in which the sequence is aided by the omission of quarto lines there are three which may most conveniently be grouped as being at or near the end of scenes¹ (*Richard Third*, IV, ii, 103-20; *Lear*, III, vi, 97-101, 102-15; IV, vii, 86-98). Five are evident breaks in the current (*Lear*, III, i, 7-15; III, vi, 17-55; IV, i, 59-64; IV, iii, 1-55; V, iii, 204-21). And perhaps most convincing of all the omissions, there are four of these longer varia in which the quarto lines were omitted from the folio and by the omission of which old types of sequence in common use in the historical plays were discarded (*Lear*, III, vii, 98-106; IV, ii, 31-50; IV, ii, 52-59; IV, ii, 62-68).

Of the group of varia in which new sequence is introduced or old sequence strengthened there are five whose function is evidently a more explicit preparation for what follows (*Richard Third*, II, ii, 89-100; II, ii, 123-40; II, vii, 144-53; *Lear*, I, ii, 157-63; II, iv, 138-43). Two five-line varia in *King Lear* are produced by a change in motivation, as the folio inserts into Gloucester's dialogue with Edmund five lines the essence of which the quarto had had Edgar ridicule when Edmund spoke them (I, ii, 105-9; I, ii, 138-44).

¹ All line numbers refer to the Cambridge *Shakespeare*, and the line count is based on the Cambridge text.

Quite similarly two varia are produced when the folio (I, iv, 323-34) has Goneril explain to Albany instead of to her steward, as the quarto makes her in I, iii, 17-21, the pretended grounds upon which she treats her father as she does. And, finally, there are four varia which deal with cruces in probability (*Richard Third*, I, ii, 155-66; IV, iv, 228-342; *Lear*, III, i, 22-29; III, i, 30-42). In these four passages, in fact, the evidence in favor of explicit revision seems most conclusive, not only because of the passages themselves, but because in three of the four cases it is clear either that the revision was not completed or that the editors or printers failed to give us the completed text in the passages which include these varia.

In taking up these groups of varia and laying stress on their bearing on sequence I do not of course wish to insist that no varium included in this list has any other adequate explanation. Printers' errors and players' cuts are always with us, and in the case of particular varia many may prefer some other explanation of their origin than the one here suggested. But surely the evidence can be presented more fairly as well as more simply by disregarding for the moment other possible explanations of the origin of all varia which, whatever their origin, have an evident bearing on dramatic sequence. I have, however, placed first in the following discussion of each group those varia whose origin may be plausibly explained in some other way, and I have in each group given the final position to the varia which seem most unmistakably to have had their origin in an explicit effort to improve the dramatic sequence.

In considering the longer passages which are not found in the folio we must not be surprised to find that some passages of marked excellence have been omitted. Some of these passages are in fact so dramatic in themselves that even in the abridged modern acting editions they have been retained. If any such passage obstructs the current of the plot, however, without adding to its effectiveness later by the very fact of its temporary checking of the current, we can see how in an effort to improve the dramatic sequence a master in stagecraft would cut out even passages that had undoubted excellence.

In the three folio omissions grouped as coming at or near the end of scenes we have an excellent illustration of this principle. In *King*

Lear, IV, vii, 86, to the end of the scene, we have a passage which obstructs needlessly the current of the plot, and neither the touch of "dramatic confidence" in which the man talking to Kent assumes that Kent is in Germany nor the rhymed exit couplet given to Kent justifies its retention. Somewhat similar is the needless drawing-out of the end of scene vi, Act III, from line 97, though the first five lines cover the stage business of carrying out the sleeping Lear into the storm. In *Richard the Third*, IV, ii, 103-20, moreover, the folio omits one of the most striking passages of the play, a passage so excellent that one might well like to think, if he had not read the restoration versions, that no one but the genius who wrote it would have the insight to strike it out. Both Booth and Mansfield retain it, and no one can deny that the figure of the clock applied to Buckingham's persistent solicitation is dramatically forceful. Yet quite apart from the fact that dramatic sequence allows no place in the fourth act for introducing an 18-line variation merely to strike off an effective figure, Shakespeare's maturer study of character would not allow him to make the previously pictured, wary and resourceful Buckingham persist so crudely under evidently unpropitious circumstances merely because his doing so long enough would help strike off a figure of speech.

Of the five passages not found in the folio which I have grouped together tentatively as needless "breaks in the current," all five are in *King Lear*. Such cuts either have a direct bearing on sequence or must take that factor into consideration. In V, iii, 204-21, Edgar relates the meeting of Kent and Gloucester, but their mere meeting is wholly irrelevant to the plot. The whole of the third scene in the fourth act is likewise omitted in the folio because it destroys dramatic sequence: first, by explaining why the king of France has gone back to France, though we did not know he had been in England and though the "Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far," does not appear in the play in person; second, by *describing* Cordelia's grief in a way that forestalls and weakens the passage, IV, vii, where her grief is *presented*; and third, by thrusting into the play Kent's conflicting explanation of why Lear will not go to Cordelia.

Of the other three passages grouped with these two the five-line classification of the fiends Obidicut, Hobbididence, Mahu, Modo,

and Flibbertigibbet (IV, i, 59-64) is certainly "daubing it further" with a vengeance and is clearly an offense against probability as well as against mere sequence. In the same way in Act III (i, 7-15) not only is the directness and effectiveness of the gentleman's description of how he found the king added to by the folio omission of eight lines, but by too full *description* of Lear in the storm the quarto forestalls and weakens the actual *presentation* in the next scene. And, finally, the folio omission of the fifth passage in this group, III, vi, 17-55, can be adequately explained only by an appeal to dramatic sequence, as it is in itself dramatically effective. For the lines omitted contain the king's arraignment of Goneril and Regan, and the whole passage omitted offers stage possibilities that might well cause a stage manager to hesitate about cutting it out unless more than this mere passage were under consideration.

Charles Kean, the first notable actor to discard the comedy ending introduced by Tate and restore *King Lear* to the stage as a tragedy, retained this trial scene and that too though he condensed from 250 lines to 150 lines the including passage from III, iv, 37, to III, vi, 84, i.e., from the first appearance of "Poor Tom" to Lear's going to sleep. Edwin Booth also cut these 250 lines down to about the same amount as Kean, and he too kept the trial scene. Henry Irving likewise retained the trial, though like the folio he cut the speech of Edgar at the close of the sixth scene. All these, however, use a different scene division from that of the folio, and the omission in the folio may best be explained by considering the evident function of the folio scene in the plot scheme. For though the trial affords a dramatic situation, the quarto version keeps the scene from running as directly to its needful end as it does in the folio.

Many might prefer to group under this general head of passages omitted because they needlessly obstruct the plot current some or perhaps all of those here grouped as omitted because in the revision of *King Lear* certain types of foreshadowing were discarded as partaking too much of melodramatic declamation to produce the truest effect of tragedy. The length of the speeches in the bombastic interchange of personality by Albany and Goneril in Act IV might indeed be considered as needlessly interfering with the rapid development of plot. Occurring as they do in the same scene, however, and

so close together (IV, ii, 31-51, 53-59, 62-69), they were evidently intended in the quarto version not merely to furnish mouth-filling lines, but to foreshadow the bitterness of the conflict and to prepare for Albany's final stand. They are types of the old threat motivation, however, and the folio cuts out at least part of the melodramatic excesses ascribed to Albany. In fact, with all of Albany's imprecations one feels that he scarcely needs the letter Edgar brings him.

The fourth passage which illustrates the older type of motivation (III, vii, 98-106) occurs at the end of the scene in which Cornwall receives his death wound.

I'll never care what wickedness I do
If this man comes to good

is the old prophecy of evil by one of the actors, not to be confused with prophecies by supernatural beings or prophets. Its immediate fulfilment is supposed to prove that the same fulfilment will come to the prophecy implied in the lines:

If she live long
And in the end meet the old course of death
Women will all turn monsters.

As would naturally be expected, many of the minor varia which consist of folio omissions of quarto lines have an evident bearing on sequence, but if the above eleven folio omissions in *King Lear* are taken one after another in the order in which they occur in the play, they form about as conclusive proofs of specific revisions as mere omissions could be expected to do. It is in the folio lines not found in the quartos, however, that we find most convincing evidence that Shakespeare revised *King Lear* with special reference to improving its dramatic sequence, and it is in the new folio lines that we find the evidence that *Richard the Third* was revised with the same special aim in view. For many new passages added in the folio version have a direct bearing on dramatic sequence, not only by strengthening old sequence or making it more probable, but by introducing sequence elements which are essentially or entirely new.

Of those passages not found in the quartos which seem to me to bear directly on sequence I have grouped together five which illustrate different types of preparation for what follows (*Richard Third*,

II, ii, 89-100; II, ii, 123-40; III, vii, 144-53; *Lear*, II, iv, 138-43; I, ii, 157-63). In the first two passages in *Richard the Third* the immediate bearing is on the stage business of the scene in which they occur. They help to balance the parties and set Dorset, Rivers, and the queen over against Richard and Buckingham. They show not only that the queen's party realize that their safety lies in the immediate crowning of the prince, but that they are sharply on their guard against any suggestion which may have in it the elements of delay in acknowledging his full rights. Here for most of the spectators, however, the bearing of these lines on the sequence probably ceases, though they plot out more explicitly than the quartos the trap into which Rivers, Vaughan, and Grey walked with eyes wide open.

In *Richard the Third*, III, vii, 144-53, and in *King Lear*, II, iv, 138-43, we have two passages evidently intended as preparation for what follows. The lines added in *King Lear* give a better sequence to the speeches between the king and Regan. Both Kean and Booth retain them in full, while Irving retains Lear's question and Regan's "I cannot think my sister in the least Would fail her obligation." Equally interesting, however, in their bearing on the revision of the play are the lines in *Richard the Third*, III, vii, 144-53, which seem evidently inserted to justify Richard's lengthy explanation to the mayor, through Buckingham. Personally I once favored the belief that these lines were in the play originally, and though omitted from the quarto because of a player's cut, had been restored in the folio. It cannot be denied, however, that when anything is revised with a special principle in mind there are always possibilities of attention being given to this specific thing where no change is really called for. In such cases it may sometimes happen that the evidence of insertion will betray itself, and this "scar" or "fault" seems plainly evident in the last three lines:

Therefore to speak and to avoid the first
And then in speaking not to incur the last
Definitively thus I answer you.

Other varia, in fact, betray this same anxiety over the mechanics of transition and form in themselves not unworthy evidence that the sequence was being sharply, and perhaps at times too sharply,

looked after. Especially is this evident in the more or less mechanical endings supplied to various scenes whose sole object is clearly just to "oil the exits."

The fifth passage which I wish to suggest as evident preparation for what follows in the play is the passage in *King Lear* in which Edmund gives the key to his own room to Edgar and sends him thither (I, ii, 181-87). In the quarto no provision is made for Edmund controlling the specific actions of Edgar, but in the folio Edmund makes sure that Edgar will be where he can reach him to put his plot in execution. Booth's stage directions for the mock battle between Edmund and Edgar follow the folio suggestion of this private door and allow the quarto "Brother descend," which is retained in the folio, by having the meeting of Edmund and Edgar take place just outside the castle, the stage directions reading "*private door L.U.E.*" In short, the lines inserted in the folio in one scene prepare explicitly for the carrying-out of a specific part of the plot in another, and here at least the folio change could have been brought about only by a plan of strengthening the sequence which took more than one scene at a time into consideration.

Specific effort to secure more convincing sequence in *King Lear* is also shown by the folio change of five lines in I, ii, from 128-44, where they are mere stage business, to 105-9, where they can play a part in motivation. The lines are not identical, in fact so far from it that the Cambridge editors insert both passages without remarking even on their similarity of ideas. Nor is it necessary in order to see the bearing of the lines inserted in Gloucester's speech in the folio to insist that the quarto lines of Edmund's speech inspired the folio lines given to Gloucester. So far as sequence is concerned, such lines on Edmund's lips, on the quarto's own evidence, merely moved Edgar to ridicule, and the folio revision therefore assigns all such lines to Gloucester, with whom what the eclipses portend are motivating forces. For to Gloucester, "This villain of mine comes under the prediction, there's son against father" finds startling conclusive corroboration in "the king falls from the bias of nature; there's father against child."

Two other varia are produced in somewhat similar fashion. In the quarto (I, iii, 17-21) Goneril explains to Oswald in vindictive

fashion her theory of governing her father, but the folio omits this explanation to Oswald and has Goneril use it, expanded and more speciously stated, in defending to Albany her actions toward her father.

In *Richard the Third* (I, ii, 155-66) the folio inserts twelve remarkable lines which have a marked bearing on sequence and which so far as I know no actor who follows Shakespeare's plot rather than Cibber's has ever cut out. The passage runs as follows, the brackets showing the new lines in the folio:

Glou.: Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

Anne: Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead!

Glou.: I would they were that I might die at once;
 For now they kill me with a living death.
 Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,
 Shamed their aspect with store of childish drops;
 [These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear,
 No, when my father Yorke and Edward wept,
 To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made
 When black-faced Clifford shook his sword at him;
 Nor when thy warlike father, like a child,
 Told the sad story of my father's death,
 And twenty times made pause to sob and weep
 That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks,
 Like trees bedashed with rain; in that sad time
 My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear;
 And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,
 Thy beauty hath and made them blind with weeping.]
 I never sued to friend or enemy;
 My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing words,
 But, now thy beauty is proposed my fee,
 My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.

The general attitude of those who insist that Shakespeare never revised *Richard the Third* is that these twelve lines were in the original, but that, as they were a player's cut, they were not printed in the quarto. Yet even if we are willing to grant that an Elizabethan player cut out by all odds the most striking lines in Richard's speech, we find it hard to believe that these lines once there would have been omitted. For when we examine all the dialogue between Richard and Anne we find that with the exception of his professed love

these twelve lines contain the only point of sympathy or possible point of contact between them. And the plea that "Shamed their aspects with store of childish drops" leaves the quarto sentence incomplete seems slight evidence, indeed, compared with the unlikelihood of the involved sentence structure of the disputed lines having found such splendid sweep of verse structure in its crude metrical setting before 1597.

So far as mere probability is concerned, the cruces in *Richard the Third* are undoubtedly the winning of Anne as she follows the corpse of King Henry and the winning-over¹ of Queen Elizabeth by Richard after he had caused the death of her sons. It would be strange indeed if the original play had contained the lines that more than anything else make these two things dramatically possible. For our only possible explanation would be that the players had cut the most effective lines, and not only lines effective in themselves but the very ones needed more than any others to make the scenes convincing.

Difficult, therefore, as it is to believe that the twelve lines beginning "These eyes that never shed remorseful tear" were cut out by the players, it is only because Shakespearean scholars of unquestioned standing have sanctioned the theory that one is able to see how the remarkable 55 lines in *Richard the Third*, IV, iv, 288-342, could by any possibility have been a player's cut. It is in fact at this point that the evidence is most convincing that there was an explicit revision of the play by Shakespeare himself. The passages are too long to quote here, but let anyone read the splendid lines from 288 to 336, then read the bickering from 343 to 417, and then try to imagine that players of Shakespeare's own time, with a keen sense for what makes difficult situations seem probable on a bare stage, could by any possibility have cut the former and retained the latter.

¹ This dramatic crux remains much the same, and the inferiority of the quarto is just as apparent, whether we assume that Richard really won over Queen Elizabeth or whether we hold that she merely feigned yielding to gain time and freedom for herself and Dorset (IV, v, 18) to plot against him. She must convince Richard that she yields, and that she does convince him is unmistakable from "Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman." Even if we grant that her yielding is mere pretense, the quarto still needs bolstering up, as no man of Richard's intelligence, even when blinded by success and desire, could be deceived by the quarto's unprepared yielding. Nor is the queer quarto-folio combination which uses all the lines of both more effective.

It is in connection with this problem and a similar textual problem in *King Lear* that the most striking coincidence in the varia in *Richard the Third* and *King Lear* becomes so apparent that once the attention is called to it each passage becomes a textual commentary on the other. The passages in *King Lear* referred to are in III, i, 22-29, and III, i, 30-42, the former not found in the quarto, the latter omitted in the folio. Both are printed in the Cambridge and yet show as clearly as the passages which form a similar crux in *Richard the Third* that they were not written as an integral whole.

Those who insist that *Richard the Third* was never revised have indeed offered two different explanations as to why the quarto does not contain the 55 lines that begin with Richard's "Say that I did all this for love of her" (IV, iv, 288). One explanation is that the cut was made by the corrector for the press who thought that this savored too much of the same way Richard had previously won Anne. The other explanation offered assumes that the stage manager made the cut to accelerate the action, and it is in support of this latter theory that Staunton asks, "Is it credible that so accomplished a master of stagecraft as Shakespeare, after witnessing the representation of *Richard Third*, would have added above eighty lines to the longest scene in the play?" But so far as I can find, no one who has held to the theory that the 55 lines under discussion were a part of the original play has attempted to justify the queer psychology of persuasion which the text as it stands in the Cambridge edition and in the folio would necessarily assume.

Unlike most other passages we have considered, this passage when examined merely with its own context proves itself of later origin by the incongruity of the 55 lines added in the folio being followed by all of the 75 quarto lines of bickering and punning of the most extreme Elizabethan type. This incongruity is not merely that a passage worthy of Shakespeare at his best is followed by one greatly inferior but that Richard's most convincing plea is followed by long passages of abuse and then by sudden unexplainable yielding.

I have been unable to find who first suggested what I believe is in the main the true explanation, that these 55 lines, which even Pickersgill admits are worthy of Shakespeare at his best, were inserted by Shakespeare to form a more convincing motivation for Elizabeth's

yielding *and that most, if not all, of the 75 quarto lines which the folio retains were struck out by Shakespeare but retained by the editors of the folio*. There can be no question but that the scene gains in directness and convincingness if we omit not only all these 75 lines of highly artificial quarto parrying but also the last six lines of those first found in the folio. Read in this way there is not only directness but sequence. The end of Richard's skilful presentation of what he has to offer to mother, son, and daughter reads:

And when this arm of mine hath chastised
The petty rebel, dull-brained Buckingham,
Bound with triumphant garlands will I come,
And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed;
To whom I will retail my conquest won,
And she shall be sole victress, Caesar's Caesar.

Try following this with the almost perfect sequence if we omit the next 81 lines and read directly after Richard's promise:

Q. Eliz.: Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?
K. Rich.: Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Then try reading Richard's specious plea, written at Shakespeare's best, and follow it by 75 lines of puns and quibbles, retorts and parries, written very nearly at his artificial worst. The mere contrast of the two passages will cause doubt as to whether they were both written at the same time and the doubt will be heightened by the way the retention of the quarto lines bars any possible legitimate sequence. In fact, here surely we have a problem in dramatic structure which those who hold to the theory of one complete original version have not solved.

The reading just suggested is not indeed the only one which solves the problem of sequence with some degree of adequacy. It would, it is true, absolve Shakespeare from the authorship of:

Q. Eliz.: What were I best to say? her father's brother
Would be her lord? or shall I say, her uncle?
Or he that slew her brothers and her uncles?
Under what title shall I woo for thee,
That God, the law, my honor, and her love,
Can make seem pleasing to her tender years?

So far as the play upon words is concerned, this passage might easily have been written by almost anyone to patch the break between the new folio and the old quarto lines. But even if we include this, we have essentially solved the problem of dramatic sequence if we omit the verbal dexterities from line 343 ("Infer fair England's peace by this alliance") to line 396 ("Misused ere used, by time misused o'er-past"). For then the queen's bitter answer to Richard's specious plea is followed by his most convincing speech protesting his sincerity, the speech from line 397 to line 417 beginning, "As I intend to prosper and repent," and ending:

Therefore, good mother—I must call you so—
Be the attorney of my love to her;
Plead what I will be, not what I have been;
Not my deserts, but what I will deserve:
Urge the necessity and state of times,
And be not peevish found in great designs.

To explain how the folio might contain lines which Shakespeare had struck out we need no far-fetched assumption. Even though Shakespeare had unmistakably cut out fifty or seventy-five lines of glittering word play, and even though Heminge and Condell had these lines cut out in the stage presentation under their own direction, they might easily have included them in the folio, which professed above all things completeness to the original manuscript. On the other hand, it may easily have happened, in fact it does happen every day in even present-day printing, that in a corrected copy the printer set up not only the correction but that part of the original which it was intended to replace. Such an inclusion of lines which Shakespeare had himself struck out would indeed be wholly within the range of possibilities if the play had been revised, as the revision would without doubt, as the Cambridge editors suggest, have been made "with corrections and additions, interlinear, marginal, and on inserted leaves."

In the similar crux in *King Lear*, III, i, 22-29 and 30-42, the Cambridge editors have in fact done exactly what I maintain the folio editors or printers did in *Richard the Third*, IV, iv, 288-342 and 343-417. They have printed the old quarto lines directly after the new lines first found in the folio, without any attempt at adjustment,

except changes in punctuation. Unlike their more arbitrary and less scholarly brethren who edited the folio, the Cambridge editors have, it is true, pointed out the evident fact that the two passages do not fit together. What they have not pointed out and what should receive special attention in this connection is that the lines first found in the folio are an evident attempt to patch up some more plausible sequence between the abuse to which the king has been subjected and the prompt appearance of the armies of France within two weeks after King Lear had turned over the government to Cornwall and Albany and their wives.

The speech of Kent in which the Cambridge editors combine the folio and quarto readings is as follows, the lines found first in the folio being here inclosed in the first set of brackets and those found in the quarto but omitted in the folio being inclosed in the second:

Kent: Sir, I do know you;
 And dare upon the warrant of my note,
 Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
 Although as yet the face of it be covered
 With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall;
 [Who have—as who have not, that their great stars
 Throned and set high?—servants, who seem no less,
 Which are to France the spies and speculations
 Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen
 Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes
 Or the hard rein which both of them hath borne
 Against the old kind king, or something deeper,
 Whereof perchance these are but furnishings,—]
 [But true it is from France there comes a power
 Into this scattered kingdom; who already
 Wise in our negligence have secret feet
 In some of our best ports, and are at point
 To show their open banner. Now to you:
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
 Some that will thank you, making just report
 Of now unnatural and bemadding sorrow
 The king hath cause to plain.
 I am a gentleman of birth and breeding,
 And from some knowledge and assurance offer
 This office to you.]

The Cambridge editors in their effort to minimize the awkwardness of having the folio lines followed directly by the quarto have changed the sentence structure of the folio passage, as will be seen by reference to the passage quoted and the folio where "What hath been seen . . . these are but furnishings" is preceded by a period, begins with a capital, and ends with a period, while in the Cambridge edition it is preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma and dash. Schmidt suggests: "It is easily conceivable that between 29 and 30," i.e., between the folio and quarto passages, "there were other lines which have been omitted in both texts." His suggestion, however, leaves the passage no smoother than the effort of the Cambridge editors; in fact, in view of the evident difficulty of getting legitimate English out of the passage by either method, I venture to suggest that the original folio manuscript may have read

What *hath been hath been* seen
Either in snuffs and packings of the dukes,

etc.; for not only does this make legitimate English out of the lines otherwise composed of structurally ununified phrases, but the explanation of how the passage came to be printed as it is presents no difficulty. The copy-reader might have struck out what seemed in hasty reading a repetition, one of the "verse doctors" might have cut out the two words which make an extra foot in a line already varying somewhat from strict scansion, or if the two words escaped both copy-reader and verse machinist, one of the commonest types of printers' errors could have produced the result as we have it in the folio.

Even with this reading, and with Kent's reference to Cordelia while he was in the stocks, II, ii, 160-65, we have not dispensed with the need for at least part of the quarto lines which the folio omits. Mere smoothness could be better secured in combining these two passages by omitting the first five lines of the quarto passage so that the passage would read:

What hath been hath been seen
Either in snuffs or packings of the dukes
Or the hard rein which both of them hath borne
Against the old kind king, or something deeper,

Whereof perchance these are but furnishings.
 If on my credit you dare build so far
 To make your speed to Dover you shall find
 Some that will thank you, etc.

This gives all that is necessary for Kent's speech which follows, and if it be coupled with the information Gloucester gives to Edward in scene iii and Cornwall and Edward's questioning of Gloucester in scene vii, we have a sufficient outline of how the forces were raised which the abusers of the king must later meet. But so far as its bearing on the question of revision is concerned, the important fact in all this effort at adjusting these two passages, or the frank acknowledgment that they cannot be adjusted, is that the folio introduces new lines in a perfectly evident effort to explain how Cordelia and the French army come to be in Dover to fight for the rights of Lear, and that for some reason or other we have not been given the way in which the transition was made from the new lines to what follows. In other words, the important thing is that, quite unmistakably, entirely new lines were added to bolster up the dramatic sequence.

To press the evidence of revision further it would be necessary to examine in detail many of the minor varia. I therefore conclude with a mere summary of the general evidence which leads me to believe that *Richard the Third* and *King Lear* did receive explicit revision at Shakespeare's own hands with special reference to dramatic sequence. (1) Of those longer varia which consist of lines not found in the quarto some of the most important are not enough in harmony with the full quarto context to admit of the explanation that the scene contained both quarto and folio lines. (2) Not only are many of those longer varia which are not found in the quarto distinctly worthy of Shakespeare at his best, but many of them bear so directly on sequence that it is straining probability to suppose that if they had been in the original draft they would have been cut out either by players or managers. This supposition of players' cuts is especially far fetched where the context is inferior, and also bears less on dramatic sequence. (3) Considered solely as supporting evidence, most of the longer omissions have a direct bearing on sequence and many of the one-, two-, and three-line varia have no other adequate explanation.

In short, I feel that the real proof of the thesis advanced is to be found in an examination of the varia, not merely with respect to the period at which Shakespeare might have written the lines first found in the folio, or as to how each separate quarto passage not found in the folio might have been omitted, but more especially with reference to the dramatic structure of the whole scene in which the varia occur and to the bearing of these varia on more effective sequence throughout each play as a whole. It is such an examination of the evidence that has led me to believe that after his fuller mastery of plot Shakespeare realized the kindred weakness of one of his greatest tragedies and one of his most popular historical plays, which was a tragedy in form, and revised *King Lear* and *Richard the Third* in a special effort to establish better dramatic sequence.

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